

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph [00049] with the following amended paragraph:

[00049] FIGS. 1, 2 as well as 3a and 3b describe three different sample embodiments of the device 1. In all three cases, they are different constructions of a five-stage fluidized layer 23. They differ in the configuration of the chambers 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 and of the product passages 18, 19, 20, 21; 28, 29, 30, 31 as well as the product openings 22. Each five-stage fluidized layer comprises a large chamber 2, the (main) crystallization chamber, and four subsequent smaller chambers 3, 4, 5, 6 of equal size, where the product is homogenized. The chambers 3, 4, 5, 6 are either provided in series or disposed concentrically around the larger chamber 2. The fluidized layer apparatuses 1 are supplied by a single gas supply. As a result of the pressure drop, the gas is distributed over the sieve bottom 11 and the fluidized layer 23 throughout the individual chambers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. The product passages 18, 19, 20, 21; 28, 29, 30, 31 are provided on the bottom, on the top, or alternately on the bottom/top. In the sample embodiment shown in FIG. 1, since the product passages 18, 19, 20, 21 are provided on the bottom, a fluidized layer 23 is created with a uniform height in the chambers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. This height can be regulated via the height of the product outlet window 22 in the last chamber 6. As shown in FIG. 1, the absolute filling height of the fluidized granulate in the first chamber 2 is greater than in each of the chambers 3, 4, 5, 6 downstream of the first chamber. In the sample embodiment shown in FIG. 2, the layer height of the fluidized layer 23 can be independently adjusted in the chamber 2, the chambers 3 and 4, and in chambers 5 and 6 since the product passages 28, 29, 30, 31 are alternately disposed on the

bottom and in the top, by adjusting the height position of the top product passages 28, 30.

Please replace paragraph [00051] with the following amended paragraph:

[00051] FIGS. 5a and 5b are schematic representations of a single-stage and a five-stage fluidized layer. FIG. 5c shows, as the result of a sample calculation, the local development of the product temperature both in this single-stage as well as this five-stage fluidized layer. As shown in FIG. 5c, the first chamber has an area, A, equal to 2/3 of the total area, A_{tot}, of all chambers, i.e., $A/A_{tot} = 2/3$. In this example, the local product temperature development (temperature distribution) of the five-stage fluidized layer was compared with the local product temperature development (temperature distribution) of the single-stage fluidized layer. The product throughput and the operating parameters are representative for industrial facilities that are being constructed today. Please note that the crystallization heat that is released was included in the thermal balance of the first chamber (where a large part of the exothermal crystallization reaction occurs). It is apparent that, by dividing the fluidized layer into several stages/chambers, the heat exchange efficiency between the gas and the granulate can be significantly improved while, at the same time, the quality and homogeneity of the final product is also improved. In this example, it was possible to increase the thermal efficiency (defined and measured as the ratio between [product temperature at the product outlet-product temperature at the product inlet]/[treatment temperature at the gas inlet-product temperature at the product inlet]) by approx. 7.5%. As a result of a higher product temperature after crystallization, during a process step, which is usually carried out subsequently

thereto, involving subsequent condensation of the solid phase (SSP), the size of the apparatus which is required therefor can be reduced.